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## On Staying Home

"WE HAD BETTER," writes Charles H. Teel of Rushville, Ill., "get out of Viet Nam before they run us out. Why do we have to meddle in the affairs of other nations? This brought on World War I and World War II, and should be a lesson that nothing is gained."

Well, Mr. Teel, down deep in his thinking, must realize that there was somewhat more to World War II than meddling. The Japanese attacked us and we struck back at the Axis and went on to win the most complete military victory possible. Then the diplomats lost it at Yalta.

However, Mr. Teel may have history on his side in his simplified view of our role in World War I. We didn't need to get involved in that one. In fact, efforts were made by the then Central Powers to keep us out of it. Nevertheless, a war force in our nation pushed us in on the now senseless premise that, by ending the stalemate in favor of the Western Allies, we could make the world safe for democracy.

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This idealism went out the window at Versailles and the punitive peace made there over our objections brought on the critical series of events that ended up with the madness of Hitlerism. So Mr. Teel can be considered correct in his conclusion only if he blames our meddling in World War I for the circumstances which made World War II, and our engagement in it inevitable.

We go on with Mr. Teel's letter:

"We have a wonderful country here if we only knew enough to stay home and take care of it. Let us hope our leaders will realize and adhere to the teachings of George Washington, who warned the colonies to stay out of foreign entanglements."

But Mr. Teel must realize that this is far too much for him or any other American to hope for. If we stayed home and took care of our country, then what would we do with all those diplomats in the State Department? And the scores of thousands in our overseas programs? And those who ladle out the foreign aid? And the "information" officers, so-called, and the CIA snoopers and the Peace Corps, and all the rest? Imagine trying to take care of these folk in a job rehabilitation project.

And what about the thousands upon thousands of bureaucrats stacked up in those glass-slatted buildings at the United Nations headquarters in Manhattan and in other UN edifices around the globe? If we ever decided to stay home, then we'd have no use for the UN and, inasmuch as we pay the big share of its costs, the expensive structure would come tumbling down with diplomats and do-gooders jobless under 105 different flags. Could civilization stand the shock of that?

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We are afraid Mr. Teel is far too late with his advice. Our entanglements overseas, including the current war in Viet Nam, all have acquired by this time built-in vested interests of enormous strength. Imagine, for instance, our trying to get out of the UN! Or withdrawing from NATO! Or collapsing any of our multitude of international projects! The howl of protest that such would engender could reverberate to Mars and back.

We are glad, even so, that Mr. Teel saw fit to echo George Washington's admonition against entangling alliances. What the first President warned about in his "Farewell Address" was the very mess in which we now find ourselves—from Viet Nam to the Congo and from the UN all around the world to Moscow.